WORDS OF RECONCILIATION.

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☞ It will be more convenient, if correspondents would address us during the summer months as follows: "L. C. Baker, Princeton, N. J."

ESSENTIAL TRUTHS RECONCILED.

In every system of religious faith which good men have embraced and which has maintained its hold upon successive generations of adherents, there is always some essential truth which gives it vitality and persistence.

1. In orthodoxy we have the truth that the claim of God's righteousness upon man is inflexible, of the certainty of retribution, of the harvest law of character by which men must reap as they have sown. We have the assertion of the importance of present opportunities, the proper emphasis put upon this present life, and that here in this sphere of earth and time men must win or lose the rewards of Heaven and the crown of life.

2. In universalism we have the essential truth made dominant that God is Love, that He is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works, that He will not suffer His image in man to be forever defaced or blotted out, that all His and our enemies, including death and the devil who hath the power of it, must be destroyed,

that He must seek to the uttermost His lost ones until He find them.

3. In conditionalism we have the essential truth that sinful man is mortal and must perish in body and soul, that God only hath immortality, and that man can obtain it only as he becomes like God and partakes of His nature, that therefore the end of the wicked is destruction. Eternal existence is the portion only of the righteous.

In each of these systems, however, the truths they hold are disproportionate and become exaggerated even into untruth, because of their rejection of what is necessary to complete themselves, and which the other systems could supply.

Our aim is now to show that there is a reconciling principle around which the essential truths in these various systems crystallize and form a perfect union. That principle is that, as the wages of sin is death, there must always be a redemptive value in resurrection.

This is a radical principle of the gospel, the first testimony of which is that God quickeneth the dead.

Allied to this principle and growing out of it, these things are seen to be true.

1. While the body and soul of man are destructible in hell (Matt. x, 28), there must remain an element in his being which is capable of receiving the quickening life from God, and which is therefore spiritual and indestructible.

2. This essential element in man is divine, because it is spirit, which is God, and because it moulds man in His image.

3. It may, therefore, be regarded as the essential man. In the truest sense it is the inmost self which survives all

changes and which death cannot destroy. It is the *individual* as distinct from the *person.*

4. The person or outward expression of this intrinsic man may be marred and imperfect, and so far as it is so it must perish. The existent personal man, therefore, who lives in the region of the outer consciousness, may, and indeed must die, so far as he fails to truly express the inner self which is eternal and divine.

5. As to how far identity of *person* will be restored in resurrection will depend upon how far the personal or existent man has been subjected to the essential. Wicked men may "lose themselves and be cast away." "They that have done ill" fail of "the resurrection of life" and attain only to "the resurrection of judgment" (John v, 29).

6. While every man must be thus raised in his own order, it is yet a blessing to all who died in Adam that they shall be made alive in Christ.

First then, how are these principles to be applied to the winnowing and renovation of the system known as orthodoxy?

They eliminate from it its dogma that the soul or person of every man is essentially immortal and destined, if unrenewed, to suffer in an eternal hell. It is seen that the immortal part of man is spirit, which is of God, and therefore incapable of suffering or of sin, that what is cast into hell is the outward personality of body and soul through which this spirit sought expression, and that this personality is lost or saved just so far as it yielded itself to become a fit habitation for the spirit. The orthodox doctrine of an immortal suffering body and its degrading view of resurrection as providing for the unjust such a body in

which to endure eternal torments, is seen to be a monstrous perversion of God's gracious purpose to raise the dead. All His retributive judgments upon sinners end in their destruction as such, and in the rescue of the divine and immortal nature in them for further experiment in life until the goal of perfect personal manhood is reached. All that is required by the Scripture teaching on this subject is that there be a complete and eternal destruction of that form and character of manhood which has proved unworthy to abide, and one which must carry with it the self-consciousness which pertains to this outer realm of man's being. Only those personal qualities abide which have been assimilated by the divine spirit in man. So that not only all the treasures of man's present life may be lost in this consuming fire, but even the thread of his personal self-consciousness. And yet the individual essence, the sub-conscious self, cannot be lost because it is of God and must finally find its way back to God. It is to this end that He has provided even for wicked men a resurrection from the dead. This must be for them one "of judgment," for they come forth stripped of the treasures of the former life and compelled to begin the experiment and discipline of life anew, while on the other hand they that have done good come forth to "the resurrection of life," because they have saved their "souls" or lives (which are their persons) and so enter upon their future life upon a higher plane, with their treasures laid up in Heaven and their life hid with Christ in God, and to be manifested with Him on that high plane of spiritual and eternal being to which He was exalted.

It is thus plain that orthodoxy can find in the light of

these principles intelligent explanation and application for all the truth of retribution about which it is so strenuous, without its cruel and repulsive dogmas of a God of eternal vengeance and an eternal hell. And if it goes one step further, and accepts a doctrine of re-incarnation as the probable mode of resurrection for the unjust, it will find still firmer ground on which to hold to all its essential truth concerning the decisive nature of the present life as man's time of trial. For this view bases itself upon the fact that God's way of teaching men to cease from sin is through suffering and judgment in the flesh, that there are but two forms of manhood known to Scripture, the earthy and the heavenly, and that therefore those not fitted for the heavenly must rise again for further trial and judgment under the bondage of the earthy. Therefore this sphere of earthly life becomes the only arena on which souls can be saved and win the rewards of the heavenly. The gospel must be preached to them here, and not in an unknown hades. Whatever future probation there may be for any human soul must reach them here in this earthly state. The heathen must be saved by a gospel carried to them here.

All this grows out of the true doctrine of resurrection, which asserts that while it brings hope for all, it yet sorts and judges all, reaching every man only in his own time and order, and giving to every seed his own body according to the unerring law of deeds done, and opening the gates of eternal life to none, except as they are quickened in Christ out of death in trespasses and sins, and die with Him out of the old order of sinful manhood and are raised to newness of life in Him.

But still, secondly, the universalistic hope is maintained that all shall be made alive in Him, under this unchanging limitation—"every man in his own order." In every case it is seen that God's image in man is preserved from destruction and is made finally to reflect His glory. It is seen that whatever is good and worth keeping in every man is saved to be wrought into that final personality which shall perfectly embody God's image. It is seen that, though the path be long, all His prodigal children shall at last "come to themselves" and find their way back to the Father's house.

And, finally, it is seen how that conditionalism is both true and not true. It is true in its emphasis of the necessary death of man, the sinner, and that in this character and form of being in which man sins and dies he must go down to corruption and be no more seen, and that immortal life is not possible to any man except as he is made a new creature in Christ. But it is not true in its denial that the root and ground of every man's being is in God, and that therefore, although the man we know and who only knows himself as an earthly sinning mortal must die and be lost to view, there is an essential man who lives on, and to whom resurrection supplies opportunity for reaching the goal of being by building himself into a human temple in which God shall dwell forever.

THE GREAT soul is he that forgets he has a soul, in his efforts for the salvation of others.—*Henry Wood*, in "God's Image in Man."

THE TIME AND NATURE OF RESURRECTION.

A short time ago there came to us on the same day two published articles on this subject. The one was made up mainly of extracts from Christian authors and poets, with texts from the New Testament, such as II Corinthians v, 1–8; Philippians i, 23, showing that the faith and aspirations of holy men in all ages have been directed toward a speedy entrance after death upon the joys and activities of the future life. The other presented a strong array of Scripture proofs that the dead, including saints, remain unconscious until their resurrection. St. Paul's anticipations in the texts referred to are explained in subjection to this view.

We give the stress of the argument at this point as found in the March number of *The Spirit of the Word:*

"Christ and the great apostle give no hint of any hope beyond the grave, or any brightness there except in the resurrection. Is not the hope of the great mass of Christians of entering into glory immediately at death—a hope that is incorporated into their songs, into the preaching, into the talks at funerals, and into all their teaching—is not this hope in opposition to the great hope of the resurrection that Christ and the apostles preached, and therefore vain and delusive? Does it not really reverse the teachings of the Scriptures, obscuring that which is represented to be all-important, viz.: the resurrection—and exalting into the highest position that which is represented to be man's greatest enemy, viz., death? Surely, the doctrine must be false that thus runs counter to the whole sweep and tendency of Bible teaching, and puts *death* in the place of *life.*"

It is needless to say that the view here presented is repugnant to the feelings of the great mass of Christians, and to their understanding of Scripture.

And yet the main argument by which it is sustained—viz.: that Scripture connects all its hope of a future life with the hope of resurrection—is invincible.

But has it never occurred to these brethren that while their view that resurrection is indispensable is correct, they may be wrong in their estimate of the time and nature of it? Are they not themselves conscious of a feeling that rejects the dictates of their logic when it bids them regard apostles and martyrs, and the choicest saints of all ages, as still in the bonds of death, unconsciously waiting to be summoned back to active life and service in the kingdom of their Lord? No wonder that a theory which binds in hades even such saints as Paul and John, and seals up in its silence all our loved ones who have gone before us, is almost universally rejected by the Christian consciousness.

We submit, therefore, to these friends, some of whom are among our constant readers, that in order to relieve their difficulty and reconcile their thought on this subject to that of the mass of their fellow-Christians, they need only enlarge their conception of resurrection. They are right when they affirm, "No future life or blessedness for the saint except through resurrection from the dead," but they are wrong in assuming that such resurrection is wholly an event of the future. The New Testament constantly affirms that the believer *is* passed from death unto life, that he *is* risen with Christ. And while it is affirmed that saints "sleep" in Christ until they are raised, it is plainly implied that perfected saints, like Paul, attain unto

the resurrection of the dead without delay. There is nothing requiring us to believe that all sleep together until simultaneously awakened by "the last trump," or that the coming or *parousia* of Christ which awakens them is simultaneous for all. On the other hand, there is much to show that the *parousia* and the resurrection reach the dead as they are prepared for the change.

That Paul did not expect any delay in the coming of the Lord to raise him from the dead is obvious from what he says in I Thess. iv, 15, 17; v, 9, 10; I Cor. xv, 51; II Cor. v, 1–9; II Tim. iv, 8. Surely, in the face of these passages, any theory of the *parousia* and resurrection which requires us to believe that he is still slumbering among the dead needs to be revised.

The truth, then, about this matter is that, while we cannot dissociate the hope of life beyond death from the hope of resurrection, we need to enlarge our view of resurrection to such dimensions as will take in all the facts. Believers are *now* made alive in Christ Jesus. They may, through slothfulness and failure to judge themselves, be unprepared at death to rise into the heavenly life. Such must remain for a time in the bondage of sleep. Sleep consigns to inactivity, but it also renovates and restores. But as we have seen "We shall not all sleep." And of those who fall asleep some find a more speedy release than others. It was the universal faith of the primitive Church that the martyrs passed without delay into the glory of the heavenly life. So St. John saw them, as living and reigning with Christ. Into the fullness of His life saints in all ages enter, as by faith and patience they have fitted themselves for it and won this crown. The Head of the

body is not now abiding alone in His glory. Many members are already fitted into their places, as partakers in and channels of the life and power with which He is now judging and saving the world. The promise made to His apostles to be with *them* to the end of the age was no nullity. Under Him they are now sitting on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel and the world of the living and dead. Multitudes of later saints are now employed by Him in offices of mercy and ministry to mankind. These are not only conscious of the conflicts which we are waging here in the flesh; they are active participants in them. It is in the power of their risen life that the whole of humanity is being uplifted out of the death of sin into the life of God. The Christ-Body has already entered upon its ministry of blessing and saving mankind; only its agency is still hidden and unmanifested. The period of its manifestation is at hand; we believe that we are in the dawn of it. This will be the "world to come" in the faith and hope of which the saints of all ages have walked. But because the day of its *manifestation* yet lingers, we are not to conclude that the Christ-Body is yet unformed, or inactive, or non-existent. It could not be "manifested" unless it were standing ready, just behind the veil, to be revealed in glory.

If, therefore, our friends would enlarge their theory of the Lord's coming so as to make it include that coming which Jesus told His disciples would begin with His resurrection, and their theory of resurrection so as to include the promise "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (John viii, 51), and also their theory of the kingdom and judgment of the Christ so as to make it

begin, as He declared it would, before that generation passed away, they would see that everything we wait for is already hidden behind the veil, and that the coming of Christ is only the revealing of what is already going on there. They would see that as the mountains were full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha, so God's invisible kingdom now surrounds us, with its great cloud of witnesses and its innumerable company of angels, and that we are now come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect (Heb. xii, 22). Let us be careful lest, in straining our eye of faith to take in the vision of a distant coming kingdom, we grow blind to the vision of the inheritance now reserved in Heaven for us and ready to be revealed.

THE RELATION OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST TO MAN'S SALVATION.

In the article on "The Righteousness of God" in the last number we found that the relation between man and God, which this phrase ultimately describes, is one of rightness or rhythm of being in which every claim of God upon man is met, and every excellence of character in man is produced, because of this complete harmony, which is the fulfilling of the law. Salvation is the rescue of man from the discord and lawlessness into which he has fallen by reason of his alienation from the life of God through

the ignorance that is in him, and his entire at-one-ment with the Source of his being.

From this point of view it might seem that the special work of Christ in man's salvation was the dissipation of this ignorance, and the winning of man back to faith in God by which the right relation to Him is restored. His death in this view was the most impressive testimony to the truth He taught.

It is plain, however, that this view falls entirely below the teaching of Scripture as to the purpose of that death and its necessary place in human salvation.

The explanation of that death has been usually sought in its supposed satisfaction of the claims of the divine law. It is assumed that God's forgiveness could not flow out toward man until the claim of His righteousness had been satisfied by the death of Christ as a substituted victim.

The fatal objection to this view is that it requires us to suppose that the great requisite to reconciliation between man and God was the removal of a legal obstruction—a penalty—whereas the real requisite was an inward cleansing, the remission or putting away of his sins.

We may take for granted, then, at the outset that the purpose of the death of Christ was, as the Scriptures constantly teach, to effect the remission or removal of sins. This could only be done by the imparting to men of a new spiritual life or energy in the power of which man could be cleansed from all sin.

Here then is the key to the meaning of Christ's death. It was necessary that He should in this way pour out His life in order that that life might become a quickening spirit with power to enter into and transform other lives

and enable them to live unto God. This explains Christ's sayings concerning His flesh as bread of Heaven given for the life of the world (John vi, 49–58), of which a man must eat in order to live forever. He could not impart this bread of life except He die, and as the life of the flesh is in the blood, He also says that His blood was shed for the taking away the sins of the world. St. John also declares in his first epistle, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." His death was necessary to this cleansing, because otherwise *His life as the Son of Man* could not be imparted to us.

For it must be remembered that man needs for his redemption something more than the influence of the Spirit of God as manifested among men before the coming of Christ. That Spirit must form and take up His abode in a perfect man, and so constitute him a new head of humanity through whom the divine-human nature might be imparted to other sons of men. The change required to be effected in man's redemption and salvation is nothing short of new creation. The prepared corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die before it could bring forth this fruit. The Lamb of God must shed His precious blood before He could be eaten and appropriated by men as "meat indeed" which endureth unto life eternal.

It is just at this point where many plausible current explanations of the meaning of Christ's death are defective. They seem content with viewing it as a supreme example of self-sacrifice, as a most impressive display of the love of God, or as a necessary expedient for the destruction of death, man's great enemy. It is all this, indeed, but more than this. It was necessary in order to the raising up of

mankind, dead in trespasses and sins, into the life of God. It was necessary in order to the bringing forth in us of that perfected manhood which is the image of God and in which He shall dwell forever. It was therefore a ransom, a deliverance from the power of sin and death, a clearing away of all the obstructions that prevent us from attaining our proper standing and inheritance as the sons of God.

It is this relation which Christ sustains to the race as the last Adam, and which so many overlook, which must explain to us the meaning of His death. He must die in order to become the life-germinating Head of the new order of manhood which bears the image of the heavenly. The manifestation of the Christ was a new and distinct step in the progress of humanity toward its high goal. That goal can only be reached through death and resurrection, and He, as the Captain of our salvation, was the first to reach it by that path. "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood He likewise Himself also took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." And these delivered ones become His children because quickened by His life. "He shall see His seed" and say concerning them, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me."

Such is the fructifying relation which the Christ holds in this field of humanity on which God is raising up His sons. He must die in order to bring forth this fruit. And we must have faith in His blood in order to be saved;—that is, we must believe in the efficacy of His death to es-

tablish us in this relation of life and harmony with God, and must entrust ourselves to its cleansing power. This is only another way of saying that we must believe in the power of the indwelling Christ to save us from sin. Only as we so believe will it be done unto us according to our faith.

CHRISTIANITY *versus* THEOSOPHY.

In the May number of *The Path*, which is the organ of the Theosophical Society in this country, there is a brief critical notice by "A. F." of this magazine. The writer regards us as in touch at some points with Theosophy, and as having taken some unconscious draughts at its fountain of wisdom, but deprecates our devotion to Evangelical doctrines and to "Bible texts as the boundaries of truth," and declares that if we would only rid ourselves of these bonds, we might "emerge into a new and exhaustless range of fact, and find satisfactions inexpressibly richer than in the harmonizing of Saints Paul and James."

We have made ourselves somewhat familiar with the writings of theosophists. When we have found in them that which seems to be true and approved by reason, and conscience and Scripture, we have not hesitated to accept it. Truth is truth, from whatever source it comes and by whomsoever held. Our readers know that we find a point of agreement in the doctrine of re-incarnation. We did not obtain the doctrine from them, and are far from holding it in the extreme and unchristian form in which they have derived it through heathen channels. We found the germs of it in what the Bible teaches of the solidarity of

the race, and in the way it connects past with future generations in character and destiny. It seemed to us, also, a necessary supplement to the scientific doctrine of evolution.

But from whatever source acquired, we have not hesitated to accord fellowship in the truth to any and to all men so far as we recognize it in them. And just as strongly would we repudiate and condemn what seems to us to be their errors.

The notice in *The Path* raises at once the issue between Christianity and Theosophy. Theosophists claim that their wisdom-religion embraces all that is true in Christianity, rejecting only its accretions. But our critic goes further. He affirms that its higher wisdom far transcends the narrow boundaries of Bible texts. He urges us to let go the doctrine of salvation by faith, and "seize the doctrine of Karma." In brief, he asks us to accord to Jesus merely the honor due to one of the great leaders and adepts who have become incarnate in order to show mankind the path of life, and to give up our Christian faith that He is the Son of God manifested to destroy the works of the devil and to take away the sin of the world, and that there is "none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

For our part we desire to affirm here and again that to us Christ is the one power of God unto salvation, that in Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. There is nothing true in theosophy which is not in Christianity, rightly understood, and just where theosophy breaks down, and proposes to give to the people a stone, Christianity gives them bread; just where it seeks to peer through the world's night for some trace of the distant

dawn, there Christianity breaks through the darkness with the light of a great hope, and with divine assurance that "the night is far spent, the day at hand," and that now is our salvation near.

Let us look for a little at its chief doctrines of Karma and re-incarnation. Theosophy teaches that the law of progress for human souls binds them to an almost endless cycle of incarnations before they can reach Nirvana or rest in God, and that they can advance only by their good works and according to an unchanging law of deeds done. Christianity recognizes re-incarnation only as it recognizes evolution. It admits it as the probable method by which the natural man, so long as he remains on the animal plane, is advanced to a higher level until he reaches the spiritual plane. But it has no use for it beyond that. For just at the point that this process of judgment in the flesh issues in teaching man to live unto God in the spirit, the power of Christ takes hold of him and lifts him on to a higher plane of being, from which he is raised above the conditions of earthy manhood into the heavenly. Re-incarnation therefore is a merciful provision for lost souls, not for souls who are saved. It is a door of hope for those who have lost personality in a second death, but it is no way of salvation for those who "lose their souls" in Christ. These find their lives again restored in Him, and placed forever beyond the power of death. The re-incarnation therefore of the theosophists becomes a great error at the point where they fail to recognize the work of Christ in human salvation. They push this principle to a point where they nullify the mission of Him who is the great Emancipator of the race from the grinding operation of

it. Their doctrine of re-incarnation also is defective in that it fails to embrace that wider operation of the law recognized in Scripture, by which one victorious soul may carry a whole group in his train and become their deliverer. A man in the flesh may represent not only a separate soul who lived and failed in the past, but a group of kindred souls may be attached to him in his conflict. Just as Christ, the supreme example of a triumphant Son of Man, unlocked hades and set free a multitude of captives who waited for His salvation, so every son of man in whom Christ is formed may end his conflict in the flesh by a similar triumph. In this way imperfect souls in whom the spiritual life was quickened may reach their goal without the humiliation of another separate earthly trial. We know not what possibilities are involved in the great principle that we are members one of another, and mutual burden-bearers. This whole wide arena of flesh and blood is the sphere in which the outcast spirits and unhoused souls of past generations are struggling back into the light of life.

There is a whole range of truth here which Christianity might teach theosophy if it would only humble itself to the Great Teacher sent from God.

And so with regard to its kindred law of Karma, which is right so far as it accords with the Christian principle that whatsoever a man soweth, that must he also reap. But it is immensely wrong in denying that beyond the operation of this principle there is a region where faith becomes effective for man's salvation.

Christianity is the gracious revelation of a new and living way to God. Instead of salvation to be attained at

the end of an almost endless Karmic progress, it shows how men can leap where theosophy bids them creep. Their faith is counted for righteousness. For what is salvation, but harmonization, the right rhythm of being between man and God? From this point of view faith works in man righteousness because it is the supremely righteous act; it sets up at once the true tone of being between the soul and God. It implies submission, obedience, fellowship. Christianity then does not violate the eternal law that men must reap as they have sown: it enables the man of faith to at once accept and submit to that law, to yield himself to the death it exacts for sin, and so out of and beyond this death to begin his life anew. Theosophy despises the means by which God in the gospel of His Son has kindled in humanity, stupefied and despairing under its long and dreary bondage to the law, the principle of faith and invested it with saving power. No! it has no use for Christ except as an adept, and yields Him no honor as the Redeemer of the world, the new Head of humanity, the quickener of the dead, the Prince of Life, the Lord of the new heavens and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

The indictment of Christianity against theosophy therefore is that it denies to the sinful world a Saviour, and to the dead world a Life-giver. It leaves the race to flounder through the endless mire under the operation of eternal law (which on the whole is beneficent indeed), but without the arm of divine strength and human tenderness which Christ reaches down to us out of heaven. If no other proof were afforded of the sluggish help to human souls this Gentile faith supplies as compared with the stimulus of the Christian faith, the proof of history is enough. Is

Western Christendom no advance upon the civilization of the Orient? Can *The Path* lead the world back that way to God?

A SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES.

God at first created man for sonship and immortality, endowing him with a nature which is divine, and in which resides his permanent selfhood, which survives all changes, and which must finally attain its perfect personal expression in that form of manhood which is the image of the invisible God.

To reach this high estate, this essential man must needs pass through lower stages of objective expression until the perfect personality is reached. The story of man's fall and punishment in death, and final destruction from the presence of the Lord, relates not to the essential man, born out of God, and who therefore cannot sin or die, but to the objective man, which is the husk in which God's image is enshrined, and which must be burnt up as chaff, so far as it fails to express that image. The work of salvation is the subjugation of this outward man to the rule of the inward, so that the existent personality shall be saved and fitted up as God's enduring temple. The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead reveals the gracious method by which the treasures of our present personality are gathered up and restored to us, while the wood, hay, and stubble wrought into the structure are burnt up in God's consuming fire. Resurrection is essentially liberating and redemptive. In its inferior stages, however, it is necessarily a process of judgment. There is nothing

unscriptural, and certainly nothing unscientific, in the view that in its lower stages it takes the form of re-incarnation or re-birth into earthly manhood. This would be the case where further judgment and discipline under conditions of creature bondage are required. But after spiritual life has been evoked, resurrection must introduce to higher stages of life and dominion than the earthly stage affords. A select seed of mankind, of whom Christ is the Head, have already reached the highest pinnacle of resurrection life and power, while others of this high class are in various stages of progress toward it. But in order to the working of the power of deliverance for the race that resides in them, the race is constituted into an organism whose solidarity cannot be broken by death. The saintly and glorified class must still act in and upon and through the living generations of mankind for the perfection of the whole, while those living on the earth must still hold within the circle of their being the past generations of the dead who must find through them deliverance. In this way—the power of Christ's resurrection extending itself in ever-widening circles—the whole race will be finally lifted above the dominion of sin and death into the life and light of God. But this universal hope, so far as it is cherished by the earthly man, must always be tempered and chastened by the thought that his existing personality can be saved and become a dwelling-place for God only so far as it can furnish materials suited to His abode; that, therefore, all that now enters into his existing manhood can survive the ordeal of death only so far as it is yielded to the control of the divine Spirit within him.

TRUE ORTHODOXY.—"That man or Church whose orthodoxy does not make progress ceases thereby to be orthodox, and from the necessities of the case becomes heterodox. He refuses to accept the truth that is offered him by the advances in science, philosophy, history, and the more exact study of the Sacred Scriptures. He is heterodox in that he falls short of the revealed truth that the truly orthodox have already accepted. He is also heterodox in all that he does accept and teach, for he keeps his thinking and teaching in the shadow of stereotyped forms of thought; he declines to bring his knowledge into the full light of the truth, which like the sun has risen higher toward its zenith; he prefers his darkness to the light of God; he fears to look the truth in the eyes, lest he should be convicted of error and be compelled to change his position, his convictions and statements. Intellectual timidity and cowardice are not consistent with Christian orthodoxy. True orthodoxy is brave, manly, and aggressive; it marches forward. Truth is so connected and interwoven in an organism that an advance in any department exerts an important influence upon the whole system. Any man or Church that refuses to accept the discoveries of science, or the truths of philosophy, or the facts of history, or the new light that breaks forth from the word of God to the devoted student, on the pretense that it conflicts with his orthodoxy or the orthodoxy of the standards of his Church, prefers the traditions of men to the truth of God, has become unfaithful to the calling and aims of the Christian disciple, has left the companionship of Jesus and His apostles, and has joined the Pharisees, the enemies of the truth. 'He that is born of God heareth God's words.'

The man who has within him the spirit of truth and is following the guidance of the divine spirit of truth will hail the truth and embrace it, whether he has seen it before or not, and he will not be stayed by the changes that he fears may be necessary in his preconceptions or prejudices, or his civil, social, or ecclesiastical position. A traditional attitude of mind is one of the worst foes to orthodoxy. We have an infallible standard of orthodoxy in the Sacred Scriptures. God Himself, speaking in His holy word to the believer is the infallible guide in all questions of religion, doctrine, and morals."—*Professor C. A. Briggs, D. D.*

SHARING.

[By Lucy Larcom.]

I said it in the mountain path,
  I say it on the mountain stairs;
The best things any mortal hath
  Are those which every mortal shares.

The grass is softer to my tread,
  For rest it yields unnumbered feet;
Sweeter to me the wild rose red,
  Because it makes the whole world sweet.

As men live outside of self—have their life in their fellows and in God—the divine image in them is uncovered. The false ego of sensuous personality is lost, and the true self found. God is Love; and love is the giving out of good.—*Henry Wood*, in "God's Image in Man."

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has nothing to do. He may

as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Out upon your guarded lips. Sew them up with packthread, do. Else if you would be a man, speak what you think to-day in words as hard as cannon balls, and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said to-day.—*Emerson.*

NOTES ON CURRENT TOPICS.

PRETERITION.—Evidently the *bête noir* of the Revision question among our Presbyterian friends is the doctrine of preterition. The friends of the movement insist that this dark and repulsive feature of the Calvinistic system must be stricken out of the Confession. The conservatives are equally strenuous that the integrity of the Calvinistic system demands it, and the General Assembly has instructed the Committee that it must not be impaired. As an evidence of how strong the feeling is upon this point the Rev. Paul Vandyke, Professor of Church History at Princeton, has been constrained to resign his position, because he was unwilling to commit himself to an unswerving loyalty to the Confession, as it has always been interpreted at Princeton, and specially to its doctrine of preterition as a test of orthodoxy.

If these brethren would only revise their doctrine of election in the light of the truth of Scripture, their difficulty about preterition would soon disappear. Both election and preterition are taught in Scripture. The one indeed involves the other. But the election of a chosen seed implies that a harvest is to spring from that seed. The "first fruits of God's creatures" begotten "of His own will" implies that there are to be later fruits. "The Church of the first-born" implies later born. Preterition therefore is the passing by of those who are unworthy of a place among those whom God chooses as His special agents and the channels of His grace to all mankind. The eleventh of Romans sets forth

precisely the kind of preterition which has place in the plans and purposes of God. In Israel there was "a remnant according to the election of grace," while "the rest were blinded." This is preterition; not a fore-ordination to everlasting death, but a doom to blindness of mind and hardness of heart which their sins deserved, and under the ban of which they must remain until God's time to visit them in mercy should arrive. The same principles are affirmed of God's treatment of the Gentiles and of the world. But it is also declared that God's ultimate purpose is to save all Israel, to reconcile the world and to "have mercy upon all," both Jews and Gentiles.

The point especially at which the horizon of our Presbyterian brethren needs to be enlarged is as to the meaning of the word "all." Does "all Israel" include the dead of Israel, and does the "all" of the Gentiles upon whom He will have mercy include past generations? Just here is the point where Calvinistic theology fatally stumbles. In denying that the promise to "all" embraces the dead, it is forced into a doctrine of preterition which means fore-ordination to eternal damnation. The only hope of its rescue from this fatal error is that it should learn anew the meaning of the gospel hope of the resurrection of the dead, and of its sublime declaration, "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive: but every man in his own order."

Some day the *conscience* of the Presbyterian Church will be aroused by the conviction that in denying that there is any mercy in store for the unjust in the provision to raise them from the dead, they have been concealing and perverting a most important feature in the gospel with which they have been put in trust. When that day comes the question of revision will be speedily settled.

Dr. Petavel's "Problem of Immortality."—Our last number contained a brief notice of this book, which is now open to all English readers through the excellent translation published by Mr. Elliott Stock, No. 62 Paternoster Row, London.

In introducing what we have now to say of this book, we will first repeat what we have before said, that it furnishes the most

able and exhaustive argument for Conditionalism that has yet appeared. It is difficult to see how anything more could be culled to add to its force from the fields of Scripture or Science or Christian literature, ancient and modern. The style and literary finish of the work are admirable.

What we wish now to do is to speak to Dr. Petavel, and to the large company of those who accept his views, a "word of reconciliation." We do this the more freely because Dr. Petavel in two or three places mentions this Magazine and our other writings, and names the editor as on his side. He also does us the justice to explain how we have modified the ordinary view of Conditionalism by our doctrine of redemptive resurrection (p. 363), and later by our view of a possible destruction of personality which leaves untouched, and liberates for a new effort toward perfect personal expression, the essential man.

Now it is just at this point that we find the possibility of reconciliation between the divided schools of Christian thought on this subject. Hitherto the orthodox side have shut their eyes to the resistless force of the argument for Conditionalism. They have fallen back upon their Christian instincts, which persist in their protest against the doctrine. And, on the other hand, the Conditionalists have refused to give proper heed to these intuitions.

Now we have to suggest that this is a case in which neither side can dispense with the other, and that the truth held by each is necessary to a complete doctrine. Even Dr. Petavel admits (p. 373) that "the suppression of the personality is precisely the supreme chastisement according to the Conditionalist view." But then he proceeds to ask: "When once the personality is destroyed, what value could there be in the remainder, if remainder there be? Absolutely none; at least none for the individual who thus, along with his identity, has lost his autonomy, without which he is no longer a man, but a thing."

But in this reply Dr. Petavel falls into the common mistake of identifying the *personal* man with the essential and *individual* man. *Individuus* defines that which cannot be divided. *Persona* relates to expression. It defines the external and existent man. Our claim is that man in *essence* is of God, and that therefore his

individuality can never be lost. As God is spirit, so man, made in His image, is essentially spirit. As such he must finally attain complete expression in perfect personal manhood, and be manifested as the son and heir of God. But in his progress toward this high estate, he may pass through imperfect forms of personal expression. Body and soul, both of which pertain to person, may be an unworthy "habitation of God through the spirit." They must be therefore destroyed. This is the destruction of personality, but not, as we have seen, of the essential man who is divine and indestructible. It may carry with it the loss of that self-consciousness which the outward man has developed, and which seems to him his true ego, his real I. Such a destruction would fulfill the warning word of Jesus against the danger of losing the soul, of losing one's self and being cast away. But we shall mistake, if we suppose with Dr. Petavel that there is nothing of man surviving such destruction, and that he becomes "only a thing." There is left, what is so well described in the words he quotes from the Rev. M. Godet, "at the bottom of this ruined personality an impersonal human existence which God can take back into His hands to draw from it by a subsequent development a personality which shall answer to His thought."

Now, just here comes in the significance of resurrection. The weak point in Conditionalism, in every phase of it, is its failure to furnish a good reason for resurrection of the unjust dead. Their resurrection is defined in Scripture as one "of judgment." The being stripped of the accumulated treasures of their former life would be indeed a judgment. And the being compelled to go over the ground of their former trial, and to recover standing where they had failed, would be of necessity a process of judgment. But it is in order to furnish this opportunity that God provides to raise them from the dead. Here comes in the grace of this new gift of life in Christ. Such a view enables the Conditionalist to hold on to all that is essential in his view—that man as now existent is mortal, that he obtains immortal life only through union in life with Christ, that the personality of wicked men must be destroyed, and at the same time it affords scope for a worthy view of the purpose of God in resurrection, and of the final destiny of man as created

in His image and partaking of His nature. At the same time it guards against the perils of Universalism, of which Dr. Petavel is justly afraid. For this peril consists in the fostering in the minds of men an idea that their sinful selves can somehow escape the damnation of hell, that God's consuming fire will leave them somehow the possessors of the things they now count dear. Thus they are tempted to hold on to their lives, not knowing that the only way of saving them is through yielding them to the well-deserved death pronounced against them. The doctrine we propose shows how that personal continuity of being depends upon char acter, that only they "that have done good" come forth to the resurrection of life, and shows how that it is only in this life, and through submission to God's judgments of us as "men in the flesh," that we can be prepared to live hereafter "according to God in the spirit."

We therefore respectfully suggest to Dr. Petavel and all our brethren of that school that they content themselves with our view of the "destruction of the existent personal man" as satisfying this threat of Scripture—"all the wicked will He destroy," and that they make room for the larger meaning we find in the hope of resurrection.

THE TRUTH MAKES FREE.—The Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst, D. D., of New York, has this to say in a recent sermon on this subject:

"There is a principle involved here that we cannot state too frequently, nor reiterate too emphatically, in these days when so much of religious mind is struggling toward larger enfranchisement. To greater or less degree every thinking man is a slave to his own convictions and conceptions. It is next door to impossible to have an idea and not be entangled and handicapped by it. And the truer the idea, and the more the man who thinks it believes in that idea, the more likely it is that he will never get beyond that idea. Statements of the truth are not truth; they are only pictures that we make of the movement of a mind that is feeling after the truth. This is not a protest against conservative statements of doctrine, one whit more than it is a protest against radical statements of doctrine. All statements are dangerous, except with the utmost caution in the handling and using. If only we use them, then well enough, but the mischief lies in this,

that they use us. Any thought that our minds may frame in regard to religious things may at the moment that it is gendered be the very perfection of pliancy and plasticity, but there is nothing in the world that will grow inflexible, rigid, and knotty quicker than a thought will. And in that sense there is nothing that will hold a man more snugly *prisoner* than his own thought will. We weave the silken threads of the cocoon that we call our theology, and when we get through, we are on the inside of it, as neat a prisoner as ever slept in a jail. Some men are small, simply because their ideas are small, and have been on so long, and have been put on so tight that they have not been able to burst them. Ideas are dangerous things. The possibilities of the direst bondage are in them. Probably we cannot get along in our religious life without having some system of doctrine, but I wish we could. But the next thing to it is to hold our formulæ of doctrinal opinion purely as a provisional arrangement. When I say hold them as a provisional arrangement, I mean hold them just as we do the rounds of a ladder, clinging to each succeeding round only as something that will help to brace us for a new pull upward. What we want to say frankly and appreciate intensely is that we have reached no finality in these things."

As RE-INCARNATION describes the method by which the animal man is advanced along the plane of life until he reaches the spiritual plane and escapes the further necessity of it, you could not expect to find a doctrine of it set forth in Scripture, any more than you would look for a doctrine of evolution there. The Bible deals rather with the development and destiny of the spiritual man. It is only the wicked, whom it speaks of as "destroyed" and who "lose their souls and are cast away," who come under the operation of this law, and come forth in this way to their "resurrection of judgment." Re-incarnation cannot be a "resurrection of life," for renewed bondage to the flesh is renewed subjection to the law in its members which worketh death.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A friend of long standing, who is a Presbyterian pastor, in writing to subscribe for the magazine, says that he is interested to inquire into its eschatological teachings, but states frankly that he

is not prepared to follow them. He states the case for the old view in this forcible way:

I am not prepared to follow you clear to the edge of your deductions in regard to the future estate of those who die in open rebellion against God, for that edge appears to be a precipice from which one might easily leap into Universalism. My study of the Scriptures thus far, on the contrary, has served to strengthen my adherence to the general Church belief in the permanent character of punishment beyond the grave, although I think that the Bible unmistakably teaches the fact of a gradation of woe, just as it surely sets forth the opposite truth, that in the glorified world there will be degrees of blessedness. That there will be any abatement of the sentence passed at the judgment upon the lost I am unable to conceive. Right in the way of such a conception, like an insurmountable wall, without even a vine upon it by which to attempt to scale the height, stands the descriptive word, *αἰώνιος*, which bears upon it the stamp of perpetuity. Even Young's translation of it into "age-lasting" does not, to my mind, weaken its significance. For if the *εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον* of Matt. xxv, 46, can be pared away so as to mean something less than continuity of duration under the wrath of God, why not also abbreviate in the same verse the antithetic phrase, *οἱ δὲ δικαιοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*? Must not "age-lasting" in either case carry with it the idea of an age which lasts forever?

Excuse me if I seem to write in a dogmatic spirit. This is far from my intention in the matter. But up the present time I have found no escape from the conviction that the suffering of the damned is unending. This, I admit, is an appalling thought, wrapped about in a horror of great darkness, and one that often intensely exercises my feelings; but athwart it, like the first gleam of day upon the horizon, promising in a little while the radiant reign of the sun, is my triumph of faith in the justice of God, for I firmly believe that He will do right, and that in the unfolding glories of the state to come there will be acknowledgment of the wisdom of His ways.

The argument of our friend reduces itself to this: There can be no betterment of the condition of those sent away into everlasting punishment, because the terms of the sentence as pronounced by Christ preclude the idea of any abatement.

Our reply is that our case does not rest upon a possible "abatement of the sentence passed at the judgment upon the lost:" nor does it depend upon the diminished value sought to be placed upon the word *αἰώνιος*. It rests upon the *nature* of the sentence and

upon the proper answer to the question, "Upon whom is it visited?"

As to the nature of the sentence, the uniform teaching of Scripture is that it is to eternal destruction. In almost every passage in which the sinner's punishment is referred to some term of death is used. The word *κόλασιν* in this passage is properly no exception. Its primary meaning is "cutting off" as in the process of pruning. Where branches are cut off for this purpose, their end is to be burned. Nor is the "soul" exempt from such destruction. The loss of the soul is the very thing the sinner is urged to escape. He is warned to "Fear Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell."

But, secondly, as to the inquiry, "Upon whom is this sentence visited?"

Here we premise that man is made up of more than body and soul. In the essence of his being, he is spirit. It is because of this that he bears the image of God. God is spirit: so Jesus taught the woman of Samaria. This essential element in man's being is therefore divine. If divine, it is indestructible, and because of it there is in man the potency of resurrection. The relation which body and soul bear to it is that of expression. They constitute the form of personal manhood which the spirit uses as its vehicle. They are the *existent* man. This extrinsic man develops a personal self-consciousness of his own. The deepest, truest self of the man resides in the essential spirit. But in many men this true self is sub-conscious. They know themselves only in the outer personality. And in this very region they must "lose themselves and be cast away," except so far as they yield themselves in body and soul to the Spirit of God to bring forth in them the fruits of righteousness.

Here, then, is the explanation of the sentence to eternal fire, from which there is no abatement. The evil personality in man must go into everlasting destruction. So far as his self-consciousness is bound up in it, he must lose it. His *individuality* as a spiritual child of God can never be lost, but the *personality* in which that image was marred and thwarted may, yea, must be destroyed. *Personal* continuity therefore depends upon "deeds done."

And here is found the reconciliation between the two sides of Scripture teaching—the one teaching the eternal destruction of the wicked, the other that Christ is the Saviour of all men and that He will seek the lost until He find them. There is a divine nature in every man, an indestructible self who must at last, by however long and perilous a path, find his way back to the Father. There is also the self of which we are mainly conscious with the investing body and soul which make up the personal man, and within the sphere of whose wants and impulses and ideas most men are confined. This existing man must pass through God's consuming fire and perish from the way so far as he is unfit to be His abiding temple.

It is manifest that with this view of the persons upon whom the sentence is pronounced, there is no place for an abatement, and no need of taking refuge behind a doubt as to the meaning of a Greek adjective.

It is plain also that the danger is avoided into which our orthodox friends are inevitably betrayed, of perverting the meaning of resurrection in the divine plan. They make an initial mistake in assuming that "the nations," spoken of in Matt. xxv, as gathered before the Son of Man, are the risen dead. Of this, the record gives no proof. They make the further and the criminal mistake of perverting the whole design of God, in providing through redemption by Christ to raise the dead. This great act of grace is turned into an infinite calamity and curse to the majority of men who have hitherto lived. Just think of it! Countless generations of the dead made alive through Christ to suffer endless torments in hell! What monstrous incongruity and perversion of the gospel of the grace of God! No wonder that our friend remarks that "the thought of the unending sufferings of the damned is appalling," and that he would gladly escape from it.

For ourselves, we confess that our chief interest in this subject lies in its bearing upon the *true knowledge of God.* All pure spiritual life must arise out of true thoughts of God. We are concerned for our brethren who have been under the long constraint of that view of God our Father, which this brother is here compelled to avow and defend.